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SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION, JUNE 21-25: US-KUWAIT
RELATIONS; TERRORISM; "GULF ROAD MAP;" NORMALIZATION WITH
ISRAEL; PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY: In widely reported remarks, an Islamist MP lashes out at former Kuwait oil minister Sheikh Saud Al-Sabah for the latter's establishment of a committee to collect donations for the families of coalition soldiers killed in Iraq. MP Busairi goes on to denounce normalization of relations with Israel saying, "We reject reconciliation with the traitorous Jews, the grandchildren of monkeys and pigs." In reply, a liberal commentator writes: "Let us together work to oust all candidates hostile to the United States who are attempting to turn our country into a base for the 'New Taliban' and terrorists." A poll conducted by a leading paper this week indicates that 90% of respondents feel the government and National Assembly are corrupt, and only 35% support political rights for women.

Al-Watan reports that letters of support for its editor-in-chief, Mohammad Al-Jassim, who faces criminal charges for criticizing the ruling family, were sent to Secretary of State Colin Powell by prominent US institutions. The paper also highlights the State Department Human Rights Report on Kuwait. One writer believes that an American "Gulf Road Map" will soon be announced to energize political and social reform in the Gulf.

In an editorial titled "Between Disregard and Attention," a liberal commentator writes that US neglect of Kuwait seems to be ending with recent visits by General Tommy Franks and Assistant Secretary of State William Burns. END SUMMARY.

2. News stories: This week, Al-Qabas and Kuwait University conducted a poll of "Kuwaiti voters" on various issues, and Al-Qabas published the results on their front pages this week. According to the poll, 90% of respondents believe that the government and the National Assembly are involved in corruption; 65% oppose giving women the right to vote or to stand for office; and 65% oppose the appointment of a woman as a minister.

Sheikh Jaber Al-Duaij Al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, denies local media reports that appeared earlier in the week of scores of Kuwaitis being detained in Saudi Arabia for links to Al-Qaeda, saying that no Kuwaiti is in police custody in Saudi Arabia, Al-Rai Al-Aam reports.

Al-Seyassah and Al-Qabas ran a front-page advertisement this week from the Kuwaiti Committee for Consoling the Families of Coalition Forces who Lost their Lives while Liberating Iraq, soliciting donations for the families of Coalition soldiers killed in Iraq.

On June 25, Al-Watan reports on its front page that according to the State Department's Annual Human Rights Report, the Human Rights situation in 15 Middle Eastern countries, including Kuwait, is "dangerous."

Al-Watan reports that the Chairman of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Editor-in-Chief of Foreign Policy magazine sent a joint letter to Secretary of State Colin Powell expressing great concern over the Kuwaiti government's decision to refer Mohammed Al-Jassim, editor-in-chief of Al-Watan newspaper, to the Public Prosecutor.

Al-Watan and Al-Anba report that Islamist MP Mohammed Al-Busairi stated in a public electoral seminar that "we reject reconciliation with the traitorous Jews, the grandchildren of monkeys and pigs," and that the new National Assembly will announce a war on Islamists under the pretext of combating terrorism.

On June 23, Al-Qabas reports that the Council of Ministers is considering a strategy to "reform and upgrade" the educational system in Kuwait.

On June 22, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Sheikh Dr.

Mohammed Al-Sabah said that a new date for a visit by President Bush to Kuwait will "be agreed upon by both parties," Al-Rai Al-Aam reports.

All newspapers report on June 25 the one-day visit of Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs William Burns' to Kuwait.

13. "Why Saud Al-Sabah?"

Liberal Political Science Professor at Kuwait University, Dr. Shamlan Al-Essa wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (6/24): "Political Islamist groups in Kuwait continue to attack the person of Sheikh Saud Naser Al-Sabah. [because] he is the only member of the ruling family to have publicly stated. that political Islamist groups pose the gravest danger to Kuwait's future and that of the region. However, not one Kuwaiti, or any of Kuwait's leaders, have supported his position. Sheikh Saud and other Kuwaiti youths are proud of their ties to the United States, because they realize that Kuwait's higher interests demand the cementing of these ties. manifested by the establishment of friendship societies with the United States, the latest being the Kuwaiti Committee for Consoling the Families of Coalition Forces who Lost their Lives while Liberating Iraq. Let us together work to oust all [parliamentary] candidates hostile to the United States who are attempting to turn our country into a base for the 'New Taliban' and terrorists."

14. "Sheikh Saud Al-Sabah's Crime"

Hasan Al-Essa wrote in independent Al-Qabas (6/24): "If Saud Al-Sabah, former Minister of Oil and of Information, is the Ahmad Chalabi of Kuwait-- meaning America's man in Kuwait-- as described by [Islamist and member of the Islamic Constitutional Movement] MP Mohammed Al-Busairi, then, the [Islamic] Constitutional Movement is the National Command of the Fundamentalist ruling Baath Party. [T]he establishment of the Kuwaiti Committee for Consoling the Families of Coalition Forces who Lost their Lives while Liberating Iraq intensified the [Islamic] Constitutional Movement's resentment [of Sheikh Saud]. Saud wanted to compensate for deficit in Kuwait's position toward the United States which has long called for political and economic reforms in Kuwait and the need to curb the powers of the [Islamic] fundamentalists. The sad result is evident for everyone to see: the marginalization of Kuwait by the American administration, as when President Bush abstained from visiting here."

15. "The First Deputy Prime Minister is not the President" Former Secretary General of the Kuwait Democratic Forum, Ahmed Al-Dayeen wrote in independent Al-Rai Al-Aam (6/23): "The post of the First Deputy Prime Minister is a fabricated position. that has no constitutional basis. Therefore, it is not constitutionally valid for a Prime Minister to delegate to a 'first deputy' the task of forming a government. The constitution must be followed in letter and in spirit. if, as we allege, we are a state comprised of institutions and based on a constitution."

16. "The Gulf Roadmap"

Ahmed Al-Dayeen wrote in independent Al-Rai Al-Aam (6/21): "The American administration is preparing to announce a 'Gulf Roadmap' modeled on the Israeli-Palestinian one, according to the former Secretary General of the GCC, Abdullah Bishara. On a recent visit to the United States, he met with American officials, one of whom was Elizabeth Cheney, the Vice President's daughter, who is overseeing Colin Powell's famed Middle East Partnership project. [The Gulf Road Map] may soon be announced to urge the GCC countries to speed up political, educational and economic reforms according to a 'liberal' perspective. This would be part of a wider project, to rearrange the region, in which the overthrow of Saddam's regime was just the first phase."

17. "Punishment Alone is not enough"

Khadyer Al-Anizi wrote in independent Al-Qabas (6/25): "A regional campaign to counter terrorism, must begin with severe punishment against those who exploit our religion. It must begin by solving all societal problems, and by thinking of comprehensive development. This can be achieved through a new curriculum, the acceptance of different cultures, building of civil society and establishing a state based on strong institutions and justice. Only then will extremists be defeated."

18. "Between Disregard and Attention"

Ahmed Al-Dayeen wrote in independent Al-Rai Al-Aam (6/25): "For a while now, official American statements have ignored Kuwait, either by ignoring Kuwait's role in the war to overthrow Saddam, or by failing to mention 'Kuwaiti democracy.' But, during the past few weeks, a change has occurred. American attention toward Kuwait was renewed. This was manifested through a phone call from President Bush to the Kuwaiti Foreign Minister. Then, there were words of praise by General Tommy Franks during a ceremony where he was decorated with a medal. Thirdly, according to 'Al-Watan

Al-Arabi' publication, is charging National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice to oversee Kuwait's internal affairs and future. The publication also claims that Secretary of State Colin Powell will soon visit Kuwait. Finally, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, William Burns

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visits Kuwait today to deliver important messages. This increased attention must carry within its folds some entitlements which may be of dimensions no less great than the previous disregard."

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